

PYM Young Friends Christmas Gathering Minutes

Julia Carrigan, Clerking

Mary Denham, Recording

Part 1

Agenda:

- Upper Susquehanna Quarter
- Discernment Committee Report
- Program Committee Report
- Native Justice Committee Report

The Clerk read a passage from Faith & Practice and the body settled into silence.

Friends read and approved the agenda.

The presiding clerk gave the body some information regarding what Upper Susquehanna Quarter (USQ) is asking and what we can do:

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The body was asked to check their schedules and their hearts as to if they are led to participate and represent PYMYF to USQ in February from Feb 1 to Feb 3. Friends were given time to decide if they wanted to take part.

Discernment Committee expressed the need for alternate youth Clerks, in case the leading Clerks were unable to come to a gathering or were similarly unable to lead Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. Alternate Clerks would officially be in charge in such a situation.

Discernment Committee did not bring forth any names for approval, but wanted to let the body know about this process and opened the topic up for discussion.

A Friend stated that because YF has 2 co-clerks, it may be hard to ask a Friend to fill in for just one gathering without the full responsibility. They suggested that picking a previous Clerk would mean the alternate Clerk has more experience. The presiding Clerk gave some background information on why alternate Clerks, and who the alternate Clerks would be. The alternate would be supporting one Clerk if the other were not able to be there.

A Friend shared that they thought it was a good idea, but the alternate should have some sort of previous experience.

A Friend stated that in future years, where there are less former Clerks present, this would be a greater need. The Friend shared that it would be valuable for the whole body to know what makes a good Clerk, and proposed a semi-formal lesson on teaching people what it means to be a Clerk and what is important to that role. Another Friend brought up a previous workshop of the same nature. Friends liked this idea.

Friends decided that they would like an option or workshop to learn about the Clerking process and skills in the next year. The body asked Discernment Committee to brainstorm ways of finding alternate Clerks and bring the methods back to the body later.

Discernment Committee went on to ask the body if they would like more time to affirm their nominations. A Friend stated that Discernment Committee would need to work in advance of Business Meetings and need to meet more regularly than every gathering to make the load less heavy and stressful.

A Friend stated that if this is going to work, Business Meeting would need to be more frequent and Discernment wouldn't be able to bring nominations to the body during shorter gatherings.

A Friend shared that Discernment Committee works hard, and that if this proposal would make the job easier the decision should be up to them.

A Friend asked for clarification on what the process would be: a first reading of the nominated names, to give the community time to give Discernment feedback. Then there would be a second reading and after that the names would be lifted up for approval from either the body and/or the committee.

The Adult Co-Clerk shared that previously, the body had a very short BM on Friday night where the only agenda item is the first reading of the names.

A Friend stated that if a member of the meeting heard their name in the first reading and not in the second, it would inspire malcontent. A Friend stated that if there is more time for consideration and there would be time to discuss the decision or feedback with the person nominated. The potential nominee would not hear their name (or not hear their name) for the first time at Business Meeting.

A Friend asked if during the first reading, there would be discussion or would it just be a report? Discernment answered that the feedback would be taken outside of Business Meeting.

A Friend shared that it may be even more nerve wracking to have to wait the entire gathering to learn if your name has been approved.

The body decided to give Discernment more time to think about the proposal.

Discernment Committee reported that they have discerned some names for Adult Clerk but they have decided to invite them to GAF at a future gathering for further consideration and discernment.

A representative from Program Committee stated that the Committee is in the process of reviewing the general schedule and sharing tips & tricks with the new facilitators to give them some support in the process of planning a YF gathering. They also shared that the next gathering's theme is Youth Empowerment with a focus on Youth Activism. Bring an adult in

A Friend shared that it may make more sense to invite a Youth Activist rather than an adult to speak. Friends liked this idea. Program Committee shared that they had discussed this, and that they thought inviting an adult who works with youth activists may be more helpful in teaching us how to be youth activists ourselves rather than possibly hearing a list of accomplishments from a youth.

A Friend shared that it's important to make the distinction between "look what I've done" and "look what you can do". A Friend agreed that a youth coming here could be an opportunity to share their legacy, and a time for the activist to hang out with us. A Friend agreed that the tone of the workshop would depend on the personality of the activist and how they decide to run the workshop.

A Friend stated that we could bring a youth activist AND an adult activist over the same gathering. Friends liked this idea. Adult Friends shared how many workshop times and spaces available over the course of the gathering.

A Friend brought up the idea of working with a youth organization and going into action rather than talking about what action could be, and shared that they have a resource we could use for this.

Friends approved giving these suggestions to the staff when planning the next gathering.

Program Committee brought forth their list of tips & tricks to the body. They asked if affinity time is important to the body, should it be prioritized, or should it be put to the side if other things are more important? They also asked what the body thought about the frequency of worship sharing.

A Friend shared that worship sharing is really important and should happen at least once a day if not more.

A Friend shared that affinity time is a mix of free time and structured common interest time, and that this provides time to hang out with people that you wouldn't normally. However, too much affinity time and free time makes for a gathering that feels unstructured and loose. The Friend also shared that there should be active gaps in the schedule so people don't get antsy.

Friends approved talking to Program Committee outside of MfB to give them ideas and feedback.

A representative from Native Justice Committee read a proposal.

Friends approved of laying down the practice of sweat lodges at Young Friends and drafting a letter thanking George Price thanking him for his help in the past.

A representative of Native Justice Committee shared that just because the work they started doing is finished does not mean that the committee's work is over, and they recommitted to the native people's justice work that still needs to be done.

Friends approved the minutes and settled into silence.

Part 2

Julia Carrigan, Clerking
Mary Denham, Recording

Agenda

- A Proposal from a Friend
- Upper Susquehanna Quarter
- Native Justice part 2

The Clerk read a passage from Faith & Practice and the body settled into silence.

Friends read and approved the Agenda.

A Friend brought a proposal to the body of the Meeting to raise the amount of spending money given from \$5 to \$10. They applauded the root of the rule, citing the eschewal of socio-economic differences, but pointed out that most things are more than \$5 in today's world. However, the extra \$5 would come out of the fees for each gathering.

A Friend liked the suggestion, adding that \$10 feels like a lot of money. The Friend added that they feel \$5 works, \$10 feels unnecessary, and that provided Friends are each given the same amount, it is an okay idea.

A Friend pointed out that Young Friends isn't about spending money, and having a small amount of money shouldn't matter if we share with friends and have gratitude for what we do have. Some Friends agreed.

A Friend shared that changing the rule to \$10 may make Friends think in more material ways.

A Friend brought up the fact that some things are unable to be shared, such as pants.

A Friend suggested \$7 instead of \$10. Another Friend stated that the math involved may make the process of giving out money unorganized. They added that there could be some discernment as to what town needs what amount of money.

A Friend suggested saving unused money from past gatherings. The Clerk pointed out that we have suggested that before, and it was explained by staff that that wouldn't work.

A Friend asked about the costs of enrolling in gatherings, as longer gatherings cost more but we get the same amount of money. A Friend pointed out that at Peace Fair, we got \$15 instead of \$5 because of the spending opportunities available. Another Friend stated that we may get more money at Peace Fair because we're working there as well. An adult volunteer stated that the extra spending allowance given at Peace Fair is a way of supporting small businesses.

A Friend stated that spending money on big businesses can be destructive and capitalistic. A Friend agreed that something about raising the amount feels bad, and having a small amount is simple and almost freeing. The Friend stated that they aren't opposed to changing the amount based on circumstances.

A Friend pointed out that almost the point of only having \$5 is that you have to pitch in and buy things together with people, in a cooperative way.

Friends agreed that the body is not led at this time to raise the amount of money given out. The body is open to discussion on this topic in the future, but did not feel led to change the amount in this gathering.

4 Friends volunteered to visit with Upper Susquehanna Quarter from Feb 1 to Feb 3: Kaise Coyle, Catherine Tobin, Silvia Schoeffler, and Genevieve Bevenour.

Native Justice Committee brought a letter to George Price _____ .

A Friend asked what future opportunities we would work with George on. A representative from NJC answered that George has other insight and connections that he can share with us on the topic of Native Justice.

A Friend suggested adding some more apologetic statements to the letter. The representative stated that the committee talked about adding more information on what we've done to discern our standing on the topic, like what we've learned and what activities we've done relating to Native Justice.

A Friend stated that the body has learned a lot about Native culture to make this decision and that they feel that what George does is cultural appropriation. They did not suggest telling George that what he does is cultural appropriation, but asked the body if it was our responsibility to talk to George about why we felt we were not led to continue.

A Friend shared that telling George our feelings on what he does isn't totally respectful in this letter, but our concerns could be addressed at a later time in a different letter.

A Friend stated that it might be prudent to take some more time to write the letter, as we don't want to offend George but we should tell the truth and be clear on cultural appropriation. This task is difficult, and the Friend suggested spending more time on writing the letter.

A Friend suggested that Native Justice Committee could revise the letter based on this input and send it later.

Friends felt led to approve the letter as it is currently written, and moved to discern if another letter later is needed on different topics.

Friends approved the minutes and settled back into silence.